

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 070336

TODEP 18

REF: JERUSALEM 394

FOLL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN BEIRUT CAIRO TEL AVIV
USUN FROM JERUSALEM 14 APR 73 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 394

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MOPS, JO, IS, LE

SUBJECT: WEST BANK REACTION TO BEIRUT RAID

REF: JERUSALEM 377

1. AS INITIAL SHOCK OF BEIRUT RAID HAS WORN OFF, WEST BANK REACTION TO EVENT HAS TAKEN AN INCREASINGLY BITTER CAST. THESE ASSASSINATIONS TOUCHED A NERVE WHICH PREVIOUS ISRAELI RAIDS HAVE NOT. RAGE AND DESIRE FOR REVENGE HAVE BECOME IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN WEST BANK ATTITUDE TO EXTENT WHICH HAS EXCEEDED OUR EXPECTATIONS. WE ARE ALSO SURPRISED AT EXTENT TO WHICH ALLEGATIONS OF US PARTICIPATION HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED.

2. WEST BANKERS RESENT FACT THAT GOI OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH ITSELF OVER RUTHLESS EFFICIENCY OF RAID. THEY ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT WAVE OF ARRESTS WHICH BEGAN APRIL 12 (TO DATE MOST
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PEOPLE ARRESTED HAVE BEEN ISRAELI ARABS, BUT SOME WEST BANKERS AND GAZANS HAVE ALSO BEEN TAKEN; INITIAL REPORTS THAT ARRESTS WERE CUED BY INTELLIGENCE ACQUIRED IN BEIRUT HAVE BEEN PLAYED DOWN). MOURNING NOTICES FOR BEIRUT "MARTYRS" CONTINUE TO APPEAR IN JERUSALEM ARABIC PRESS, AND APRIL 11 ANGLICAN MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR KEMAL NASER IN BIR ZEIT WAS BY ALL ACCOUNTS AN EMOTIONAL PROCEEDING (AN AMERICAN ANGLICAN PRIEST WAS ADVISED BY ARABS NOT TO ATTEND), WITH IDF TROOPS REPORTEDLY PREVENTING STUDENTS FROM ENTERING TOWN WHILE SERVICE GOING ON.

3. IN ADDITION, MANY PEOPLE IN AREA HAVE SWALLOWED "BIG LIE" AND BELIEVE USG PLAYED SOME PART IN RAID. EVEN SOME OF OUR MORE SOPHISTICATED CONTACTS HAVE EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM THAT RAID COULD HAVE BEEN BROUGHT OFF WITHOUT OUR HELP. THOSE WHO DO NOT ACCEPT THESIS OF DIRECT US PARTICIPATION MAINTAIN THAT WITHOUT US FINANCIAL AND MILITARY SUPPORT ISRAEL WOULD NOT BE IN SUCH A COMMANDING POSITION VIS A VIS THE ARABS. CONGENOFF HAD SEVERAL POLITICAL "REGRETS" FROM ARABS FOR RECEPTION HELD APRIL 13. ARTICLE IN APRIL 14 ARABIC WEEKLY "AL FAJR" ELABORATES THEME OF CIA PARTICIPATION AT SOME LENGTH.

4. WE HAVE FREQUENTLY MADE POINT THAT WHILE MOST WEST BANKERS DO NOT ACTIVELY SUPPORT RESISTANCE MOVEMENT, THEY DO HARBOR LATENT SYMPATHY WITH THE FEDAYEEN AS FELLOW PALESTINIANS STRUGGLING, HOWEVER INEFFECTIVELY, AGAINST ISRAEL. EVEN WEST BANKERS WHO DID NOT AGREE WITH OR PARTICULARLY ADMIRE NASER, ADWAN, AND NAJAR NOW RESPECT THESE MEN - IN DEATH - AS PALESTINIANS WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES TO THE CAUSE.

5. BEIRUT RAID WAS INTENSE HUMILIATION FOR WEST BANKERS, EXPOSING AS IT DID EVEN NATURE OF THE BATTLE. WEST BANKERS, HOWEVER, HAVE NOT BEEN INTIMIDATED BY BEIRUT HUMILIATION AS MUCH AS THEY HAVE BECOME EMBITTERED. WHILE THERE IS LITTLE THEY CAN DO IN CURRENT SITUATION TO VENT THEIR FRUSTRATIONS, BEIRUT RAID HAS CERTAINLY RETARDED CAUSE OF "COEXISTENCE" IN AREA AND LEFT PALESTINIANS LIVING UNDER OCCUPATION WITH VERY BITTER AFTERTASTE.
DAY UNQUOTE ROGERS

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